

Chapter Eight

Short history of Buddhism

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- Chandragupta Mauraya was the first ruler of the Mauryan Empire.
- Chandragupta was a cruel ruler. Thousands of people were killed for being considered his enemies.
- He became so paranoid that he slept in a different room every night.

- The grandson of Chandragupta was named Asoka.
- For a long time Asoka was the same type of ruler as his grandfather. He even had to sleep in a different room every night.
- He was given a nickname, Canda Asoka.
(Fierce Asoka.)
- This went on until Asoka converted to Buddhism.

- Asoka had 35 foot stone pillars erected at each of the places where the main events of Buddha's life took place.
- He led his people on the Buddhist path and devoted himself to living the life of Buddha.
- Asoka sent messengers to other kingdoms to spread the teachings of Buddha, Two of which were his son and daughter.

Buddhism in South East Asia

- Theravada Buddhism first reached Sri Lanka late in the 300s of B.C.
- It did not, however, spread through South Asia until the 12th century A.D.
- Most people think that the countries in order that took the Buddhist religion as there predominant religion are Burma, Sumatra, Java, Laos, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia.

Mahayana Buddhism in North Asia

- Buddhism reached China about A.D. 100, Korea in about the 300s, Japan in the 500s, and Tibet in the 600s.
- Some say that Buddhism reached China as early as the year 65, when the Chinese Emperor had two Indian monks build a monastery there. It was then carried to Korea from there.
- Buddhism reached Japan on October 13, 538, when a Korean ruler gave Emperor Kimmei of Japan a Bronze statue of Buddha and many of Buddha's writings. Japan used to worship many local gods so many sects of Buddhism are now worshiped there as a result of the country converting.

- There are about 524 million followers of Buddhism in the world.
- All but about 6 million of these are located in Asia.